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ABSTRACT

Differences in attitudes about maternal employment during infancy versus childhood were assessed by measuring the perceptions of college students grouped according to their mothers' employment status during different periods of their children's development. Attitudes about both costs and benefits associated with maternal employment were examined separately. Consistent with earlier studies, results revealed that a history of maternal part-time employment was associated with students' perceiving maternal employment as entailing fewer costs and greater benefits to children than either full-time employment or non-employment. (Contains 132 references.) (GCP)

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Attitudinal Correlates of Maternal Employment during Infancy versus Childhood

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Abstract

Differences in attitudes about maternal employment during infancy versus childhood were assessed by measuring the perceptions of college students grouped according to their mothers' employment status during different periods of their children's development. Attitudes about both costs and benefits associated with maternal employment were examined separately. A sample of 128 college students completed the Beliefs About the Consequences of Maternal Employment for Children (BACMEC) scale. Consistent with earlier studies, one-way ANOVA (maternal employment during the participants' infancy: non-employment, part-time employment, and full-time employment) revealed that a history of maternal part-time employment was associated with students' perceiving maternal employment as entailing fewer costs and greater benefits to children than either full-time employment or non-employment.

On both the cost and benefit summary scales and several individual scale items, significant differences emerged among respondents whose mothers worked part-time during their infancy and those whose mothers either worked full-time or not at all. Young adults whose mothers worked part-time during the first two years of their life perceived significantly greater advantages and fewer disadvantages associated with maternal employment than young adults whose mothers worked full-time or were not employed. Interestingly, on the majority of measures, there was no significant difference between the perceptions of children whose mothers worked full-time and stayed at home during their infancy.

Separate oneway ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Cost subscale revealed a number of significant group differences. Participants whose mothers worked full-time or stayed at home during their infancy were more likely to perceive greater psychological risks associated with maternal employment.

Those participants whose mothers worked part-time during infancy not only reported the fewest costs associated with maternal work, but also reported the most benefits associated with maternal work. Children whose mothers worked part-time during infancy emerged as the strongest advocates for maternal employment. On the other hand, experience of full-time maternal employment during later developmental stages was most linked to positive attitudes toward mothers' working.

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Introduction

Participation of mothers in the labor force has increased remarkably in recent decades (Dumas & Lavoie, 1992; Hofferth & Phillips, 1987). The number of dual-paycheck married couples surpassed "traditional" families by three-to-one (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). As a result, many researchers have felt compelled to explore the correlates of maternal employment (Barling, 1990; Cowan & Cowan 1992; Gottfried & Gottfried, W., 1988; Lerner & Galambos, 1991). In June 1998, Census Bureau data indicated that of the 3.7 million women with infants, 36 percent were working full-time, 17 percent were working part-time, and 6 percent were actively seeking employment.

In general, results of past studies of differences between children of working and nonworking mothers on most measures of adjustment, intelligence, and academic achievement indicate small group differences and have been inconsistent with each other. The majority of previous studies have yielded no significant differences in performance and development when children in single versus dual income families have been compared. In those studies that have found statistically significant group differences, the differences tend to be of limited magnitude.

When differences between groups have been detected, they are often different for sons and daughters. Generally, studies showing harms of maternal employment tend to find them for sons more so than for daughters, and studies revealing benefits of maternal employment tend to find them to be strongest for daughters (Bronfenbrenner and Crouter, 1982; Hoffman, 1980). Bronfenbrenner and his associates have shown that working mothers have a more optimistic view of their daughters than their sons, while the opposite is true for homemakers (Bronfenbrenner et al., 1984). These findings are associated with the increase in mother-son conflict and strengthen peer involvement by boys. Both of these facts may put some males at jeopardy for an assortment of peer-related problems.

Over the past 25 years, many studies have been done to examine the hypothesis that a history of extensive non-parental care leads to insecure–attachment. Many researchers have explored whether the nature of the relationship that develops between an infant and mother in the first year of infancy might be negatively influenced by repeated separations that arise when a mother is employed outside the home. Early, extensive non-maternal care in the first year of infancy has been modestly related to insecure infant-mother attachments in several studies (e.g., Belsky, 1990; Lamb, Sternberg, & Prodromidis, 1992; Roggman, Langlois, Hubbs-Tiat, & Reiser-Danner, 1994).

Symons (1998) conducted a longitudinal study that examined the relations of post-partum maternal employment profiles with infant-mother attachment security, maternal sensitivity, and concurrent child and maternal characteristics in a rural Canadian sample. Participants in the study consisted of 57 mothers and their 23 to 27 month-old children whom were recruited from an earlier study of employment patterns, conducted by Symons & McLeod (1994). Symons' study was limited by the lack of observations within care-giving settings to provide better assessments of the quality of care. Nevertheless, this study's observations of infants in multiple settings at multiple times offers an expanded picture of the development of social relationships within their broader family and social ecology.

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Richards and Duckett (1994) found that working and middle-class 5th to 8th grade children from two-parent families with part-time employed mothers were likely to have higher self-esteem than children with nonemployed or full-time mothers. On the other hand, Rosenthal and Hansel (1981) found no differences in self-concept or vocational maturity among 7th to 9th grade children with employed and nonemployed mothers. It is also unclear whether the effect of maternal employment on children's psychological outcomes varies by gender (Montemayer & Clayton, 1983). Studies generally show that maternal employment benefits girls' perception of self, educational aspirations, and social adjustment, though the impact of maternal employment on boys is inconclusive (Montemayer & Clayton, 1983; Richards & Duckett, 1991).

Researchers have also been interested in the effects of maternal employment on the mothers themselves. Waters & Moore (2002) conducted work based on Jahoda's deprivation theory, which argues that unemployment causes psychological distress because it deprives people of the multiple invisible functions that employment provides. Research that included 279 inner-city mothers of young children who were attending well-child health clinics determined that poverty, low-education, illness (especially that which restricts activity) and unemployment put mothers at higher risk for depression (Heneghan et al, 1998). There also have been many non-empirical publications which maintain the argument that unemployed women are much more likely to suffer from depression than working women.

In 1990, McGrath et al., found that high levels of depressive symptoms are particularly common among individuals with economic problems and those of lower socioeconomic status. Also, individuals who are less educated and unemployed are at higher risk for depression. Both of these risk factors are overrepresented among women, and as a consequence women are more prone to depression (McGrath et al., 1990). Rodriguez et al. (2001) argued government entitle benefits among unemployed women are associated with a reduction of depression symptoms in the long term. Their focus was on how welfare affects the lives of women and men, and if welfare was responsible for depression.

In addition to problems associated with non-employed mothers, many researchers have studied the disadvantages of part-time employment. A growing number of mothers seek part-time employment so that they can still be at home to raise their children. Many part-time workers feel discouraged due to the salary they receive, the lack of program stability, and the lack of benefits offered (Tucker, 2003). According to Twigg, few part-time positions provide opportunities for promotions (Banachowski, 2003). Title and status may be lost when individuals choose to work part-time after having worked full-time. Upon returning to work, mothers who leave full-time employment to stay home with their children for an extended period of time are likely to earn 30 percent of their previous full-time pay. Not only do women lose their "place in line," but also they may never catch up (McLain, 1998).

The average wages of part-time employees have always been much lower than those of full-time employees (Kosters, 1995). Often this is due to the lack of skill that part-time employees have, but many times it is due to the fact that many part-time employees have other priorities that assume importance over their career. Therefore, the employee is not as dedicated to the job as a full-time worker. Companies do not see the necessity to give equal wages to those employees who are not as committed to their work (Tucker, 2003).

The high cost of benefits prevents the majority of companies from offering benefits to part-time workers. The added costs of providing benefits to part-time employees would limit resources needed to support business growth (Fraser, 1992). Those part-time jobs that do offer benefit plans to their employee tend to demand a longer work schedule than those that do not (Buchmueller & Lettau, 1999).

Women who have held full-time jobs but then stop working to stay home with their children have a difficult time adjusting to the part-time work that they are prone to start once their children are in school. They find it difficult to accept that they are working just as hard as they had previously; yet earning much less than when they worked full-time. Their title and/or status as a worker is usually diminished and therefore they feel less respected than their full-time coworkers. This change causes much frustration among part-time working mothers (McLain, 1998).

Other research has explored the disadvantages to mothers of full-time maternal employment. Some researchers have speculated that mothers who work full-time are harried, unavailable, and distracted. Some question how the stress from working full-time affects the relationship between the mother and child, as well as childhood adjustment. A mother's perceived level of stress may determine maternal parenting behavior and childhood outcomes (Pett, Vaughan-Cole, & Wampold, 1994). Psychological stress can be a consequence of severely strenuous life events, or routine events that accumulate to frustrate an individual. Some research has suggested that such stress may negatively affect the quality of the mother-child relationship (Pett, Vaughan-Cole, & Wampold, 1994).

There is some evidence to suggest that maternal employment may lead to role overload. Even though there has been a sharp increase in the number of working mothers, women typically continue to carry the major responsibility for domestic work. "This double duty can lead to a sense of role overload and an inability to balance obligations at work and home" (Tingey, Kiger, & Riley, 1996). While a study conducted by Tingey, Kiger, and Riley did not find that employment measures were associated with stress among working mothers, they did conclude that stress develops when the mother senses a lack of control over the demands of her multiple roles. In addition, dissatisfaction with child-care arrangements was the highest predictor of stress (1996). Thus, it appears that other factors combine with employment status to affect stress levels.

In addition to psychological stress, research has shown that full-time working mothers show physiological indicators of stress. A study conducted at Duke University Medical Center reported that working mothers excreted substantially more of the stress hormone cortisol in their urine than did working women without children. "Working women with children reported more demands on their time and more mental strain at home, but not on their jobs" (Bower, 1997). Thus, the pressures at work and in the home may combine to have a physiological toll on working mothers.

While some research has reported that maternal employment raises stress levels, other studies have shown that employment actually increases a mother's well being. Past research has shown that employed mothers score lower on measures of depression and various stress indicators. Also, employment can be a source of support for family difficulties (Taylor & Wang, 2000). While research mentioned previously suggested that multiple roles increase stress level, the expansion hypothesis holds that multiple roles can have an energizing effect on people. The findings of a study conducted by Makri-Botsari and Makri indicated that employed mothers report lower levels of anxiety and depression than unemployed mothers (2003). In addition, research conducted by Barnett and Marshal (1992) found no negative spillover effects from

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employment to parenting or vice versa. Such evidence suggests that employed mothers seem to compartmentalize their multiple roles as both an employee and parent.

The contradictory evidence on the issue of stress due to maternal employment seems to indicate that work-related stress alone has little bearing on the mother-child relationship. The mother's attitude toward her job, the stability of child-care arrangements, and even the father's participation in domestic work have all been shown to affect the relationship between stress and maternal behavior (Taylor & Wang, 2000). Women who report problems both at home and at work report problematic mother-child relationships (Makri-Botsari & Makri, 2003). Thus, employment itself may not be the cause of stress, but it can intensify it. Although taking on multiple roles may not predict stress in employed mothers, the quality of the roles should be considered to help indicate stress levels.

Holcomb (1998) argued that despite little empirical evidence, the media has conveyed negative and false information about dual-income families, and working mothers in particular. Dual-income couples are often depicted as lacking time for one another and their children, and as being selfish and materialistic. Their children are often portrayed as desperate for love and attention while being cared for by surrogate childcare providers. The media also often disseminates disturbing, exaggerated, and incorrect information about the outcomes for children of two-paycheck families (Holcomb, 1998; Galinsky, 1999).

In the past several decades, a significant number of researchers have concluded that maternal employment itself has very little effect on children (Galinsky, 1999) and when there is an effect noted, it is generally positive. Research has constantly and consistently reported that maternal employment does not affect the bond between the mother and child (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 1997), does not weaken the influence of parents on children (Fuligni, Galinsky, & Poris, 1996; NICHD, 1997), and does not influence children's evaluation of the mothers' quality of care (Galinsky, 1999). Maternal employment effects depend upon many factors, including parental attitudes towards maternal employment, the income of the family, the mother's sensitivity to her children, quality of the parents' jobs, and the quality of child care (Fuligni et al., 1995; Galinsky, 1999). The current study investigated college students' perceptions of the specific costs and benefits to children associated with maternal employment outside the home as a function of their mothers' work status at different development periods.

Method

Subjects:

The subjects surveyed in this study were 128 undergraduates, from two parent households, enrolled in an introductory psychology class at a small liberal arts college in the Middle Atlantic region of the U.S. The sample consisted of 76 males and 52 females. The subjects ranged in age from 17 to 28 years old.

Procedure:

The packet used in this study was handed out to subjects in the introductory psychology classroom. Subjects were asked to fill out the packet in its entirety. Ample time was given to the students to complete the questionnaire packet. The packet used in this study consisted of five different parts.

In part one, subjects were asked to provide demographic information and to answer questions concerning their career and family expectations. These questions required subjects to disclose information concerning their expectations about family plans, job type, job

characteristics, and work preference based on the age of their youngest child. Subjects were also asked 10 questions concerning their attitudes toward their mother and father. These questions required subjects to indicate their degree of agreement with each statement on a 4 point Likert scale.

Part two of the packet was made up of the BACMEC questionnaire (Greenberger et al., 1988). The BACMEC is a 24-item scale developed to measure Beliefs About the Consequences of Maternal Employment for Children. The BACMEC included beliefs about both benefits (13 items) and costs (11 items). Studies of five samples (n=375) have demonstrated that the total BACMEC scale and its subscales are highly reliable and have good convergent, divergent, and concurrent validity (Greenberger et al., 1988).

In part three of the packet, subjects were asked to disclose information about their mother's work status at each stage of development. The stages of development were infancy (birth to 1 1/2 years old), preschool (2 to 5 years old), childhood (6 to 12 years old), and adolescence (13 to 18 years old). The subjects were asked to report whether their mothers were employed part-time, full-time, or not employed outside the home during each stage of development. Subjects also disclosed information about their mother's job, indicating whether it was professional, white collar, or blue collar work. Subjects were also asked to indicate whether or not they had been raised in a single parent household.

Results

Directionally adjusted responses to the BACMEC were totaled for each participant to create two summary measures of attitudes toward maternal employment, one assessing perceived benefits and another assessing perceived costs. Students who reported a history of having lived in a single parent household were excluded from subsequent analyses.

Maternal Employment During Infancy

A one-way ANOVA (maternal employment during infancy) was performed in order to evaluate the relationship between maternal employment status during infancy (non-employment, part-time employment, and full-time employment) and students' perceptions of maternal employment costs and benefits to children. Significant differences on the Cost subscale were found among the maternal employment groups ($F=6.72$; $df=2/90$; $p<.01$). Students whose mothers worked full-time perceived fewer costs associated with maternal employment than the students in the other two maternal employment groups (non-employment: $x=36.12$, $s.d.=9.13$, $n=66$, part-time employment $x=29.23$,$s.d.=9.04$,$n=35$, and full-time employment $x=32.81$, $s.d.=8.95$, $n=27$). Oneway ANOVA also revealed significant differences among the groups in terms of the perceived benefits of maternal employment ($F=2.61$; $df=2/125$; $p<0.1$). Students whose mothers worked part-time perceived there as being greater benefits associated with maternal employment than the students in the other two maternal employment groups (non-employment: $x=50.00$, $s.d.=7.85$, $n=46$, part-time employment $x=55.00$,$s.d.=7.48$,$n=25$, and full-time employment $x=50.18$, $s.d.=6.01$, $n=22$).

Separate one-way ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Cost subscale revealed six significant group differences. On the six items, participants' with part-time employed mothers perceived the fewest disadvantage associated with maternal employment. On

the six items, participants' with non- employed mothers perceive the most disadvantages associated with maternal employment.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment during infancy groups ($F=5.94$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Working mothers are more likely to have children with psychological problems than mothers who do not work outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	2.76	1.11	66
Part-time	2.03	1.04	35
Full-time	2.74	.94	27

Students whose mothers worked part-time during their infancy were least likely of the three groups to support the notion that maternal employment increases children's risk of developing psychological problems. Interestingly, participants whose mothers were full-time responded similarly to this item as the mothers who were non-employed.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during infancy groups ($F=5.19$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children are less likely to form a warm and secure relationship with a mother who is working full-time.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.97	1.24	66
Part-time	3.23	1.29	35
Full-time	3.30	1.23	27

Students whose mothers worked part-time or full-time during their infancy were least likely of the three groups to support the idea that children are less likely to form bonding relationships with mothers who are working full-time. Participants whose mothers were non-employed during infancy were more likely to support this item than the other two, maternally employed groups.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during infancy groups ($F=4.10$; $df=2/125$; $p< .05$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Teenagers get into less trouble with the law if their mothers do not work full-time outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.14	1.42	66
Part-time	2.37	1.14	35
Full-time	2.89	1.05	27

Students whose mothers worked part-time during their infancy were least likely of the three groups to support the notion that teenagers get into less trouble with the law if the mother is not employed. Participants whose mothers worked full-time were slightly more inclined to agree with this statement than the participants whose mothers worked part-time. However, participants whose mothers were not employed saw this item as a greater cost than the other two maternally employed groups.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during infancy groups ($F=4.19$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of working mothers grow up to be less competent parents than other children, because they have not had adequate parental role models.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	2.95	1.22	66
Part-time	2.25	1.11	36
Full-time	2.63	1.18	27

Children whose mothers worked part-time during infancy were least likely of the three groups to perceive children of working mothers to grow up to be less competent parents than other children due to the fact that they did not have sufficient parental role models. Those children whose mothers worked part-time and full-time during infancy did not see as great a risk to children of working mothers on this item as did the children of non-employed mothers.
Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during infancy groups ($F=3.83$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children do better in school if their mothers are not working full-time outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.65	1.20	66
Part-time	2.97	1.25	36
Full-time	3.48	1.09	27

Young adults whose mothers worked part-time were least likely of the three groups to perceive children of non-employed mothers to do better in school than children of full-time employed mothers. Those young adults whose mothers were not employed during infancy and those whose mothers worked full-time during infancy were most likely to perceive this adverse consequence of maternal employment.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during infancy groups ($F=6.10$; $df=2/126$; $p< .01$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of working mothers are more likely to experiment with drugs, alcohol and sex at an earlier age.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.20	1.34	66
Part-time	2.33	1.04	36
Full-time	2.63	1.24	27

Young adults whose mothers worked part-time were least likely of the three groups to perceive children of working mothers as more likely to experiment with substance use and sex. Those whose mothers were not employed were most likely to perceive this adverse effect of maternal employment, while those whose mothers worked full-time during their infancy endorsed this belief at moderate levels.

Separate one-way ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Benefit subscale revealed two significant group differences. On both of these items, participants' whose mothers worked part-time during their infancy perceived the greatest benefits with maternal employment. On one item, participants whose mothers worked full-time during their infancy perceived greater benefits with maternal employment than those of non-employed while on the other item those whose mothers were non-employed during infancy perceived greater benefits associated with maternal employment.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during infancy groups ($F=4.28$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: For young children, working mothers are good role models for leading busy and productive lives.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.73	1.09	66
Part-time	4.33	.86	36
Full-time	4.00	.96	27

Children whose mothers worked part-time during their infancy were most likely to agree that for younger children, mothers who work are good role models for leading busy and productive lives. Those children whose mothers were non-employed during their infancy were least likely to agree with this statement, while children whose mothers worked full-time during their infancy endorsed this belief at a moderate level.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment during infancy groups ($F=4.44$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: Children whose mothers work full-time outside the home develop more regard for women's intelligence and competence.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.70	.94	66
Part-time	4.22	1.05	36
Full-time	3.60	.89	27

Children whose mothers worked part-time during their child's infancy were more likely to see this as fostering children's respect for women's intelligence. In contrast, those whose mothers worked full-time and those whose mothers were not employed were less likely to perceive this advantage of maternal employment.

A one-way ANOVA (maternal employment during preschool years) was performed in order to evaluate the relationship between maternal employment status during preschool years(non-employment, part-time employment, and full-time employment) and students' perceptions of maternal employment costs and benefits to children. Significant differences on the Cost subscale were found among the maternal employment groups ($F=7.26$; $df=2/125$; $p<.01$). Students whose mothers did not work at all perceived there as being greater costs associated with maternal employment than the students in the other two maternal employment groups (non-employment: $x=37.31$, s.d.=10.01, $n=45$, part-time employment $x=33.13$, s.d.=8.30, $n=39$, and full-time employment $x=30.05$, s.d.=8.58, $n=44$). Oneway ANOVA also revealed significant differences among the groups in terms of the perceived benefits of maternal employment ($F=3.33$; $df=2/125$; $p<.05$). Students whose mothers worked full-time perceived there as being greater benefits associated with maternal employment than the students in the other two maternal employment groups (non-employment: $x=48.42$, s.d.=6.17, $n=45$, part-time employment $x=50.13$,s.d.=8.61,$n=39$, and full-time employment $x=52.57$, s.d.=7.99, $n=44$).

Separate one-way ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Cost subscale revealed three significant group differences. On the three items, participants' with non-employed mothers during preschool years perceived the most disadvantages associated with maternal employment. On two of the three items, participants' with mothers employed full-time during preschool years perceive the least disadvantages associated with maternal employment.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during preschool years groups ($F=8.05$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children are less likely to form a warm and secure relationship with a mother who is working full-time.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	4.13	1.16	45
Part-time	3.64	1.33	39
Full-time	3.09	1.20	44

Students whose mothers were not employed during their preschool years were more likely than students whose mothers worked full-time during their preschool years to support the notion that maternal employment compromises the development of a warm and secure relationship with a mother. Those students whose mothers work part-time scored at an intermediate level between the two other groups.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during preschool years groups ($F=5.55$; $df=2/126$; $p< .01$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Young children learn more if their mothers stay at home with them.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.93	1.18	45
Part-time	3.78	1.03	40
Full-time	3.20	1.02	44

Students whose mothers worked full-time during their preschool years were least likely of the three groups to support the idea that children whose mothers work do not learn as much as they would if their mother did not work. Students whose mothers were not employed were most likely to believe that young children learn more when mothers stay at home.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment during preschool years groups ($F=4.59$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$). BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of mother who work develop lower self-esteem because they think they are not worth devoting attention to.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.11	1.17	45
Part-time	2.68	1.02	40
Full-time	2.41	1.11	44

Young adults whose mothers were not employed were more likely than the young adults whose mothers were employed to perceive children of full-time working mothers as being more likely to develop lower self-esteem. Offspring of part-time employed mothers saw slightly more risks to self-esteem than those of full-time employed mothers.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during preschool years groups ($F=6.50$; $df=2/126$; $p< .01$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of working mothers are more likely to experiment with drugs, alcohol and sex at an early age.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.31	1.29	45
Part-time	2.83	1.28	40
Full-time	2.36	1.14	44

Young adults whose mothers were not employed were more likely than the young adults whose mothers were employed to perceive children of full-time working mothers as being more likely to experiment with sex, drugs and alcohol. Offspring of part-time working mothers perceived greater risk of dangerous behaviors than those of full-time employed mothers.
Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during preschool years groups ($F=5.12$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Working mothers are more likely to have children with psychological problems than mothers who do not work outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	2.96	1.15	45
Part-time	2.26	1.02	39
Full-time	2.41	1.02	44

Young adults whose mothers were not employed were more likely than young adults whose mothers were employed to perceive children of full-time working mothers as being more likely to develop lower self-esteem. Offspring of part-time employed mothers saw slightly more risks to self-esteem than those of full-time employed mothers.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during preschool years groups ($F=3.19$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children do better in school if their mothers are not working full-time outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.69	1.18	45
Part-time	3.53	1.15	40
Full-time	3.07	1.25	44

Children's achievement in school is perceived to be at greater risk if their mothers work full-time outside the home by those children of non-employed mothers and to a slightly lesser degree by those whose mothers worked part-time. The least belief in this risk was seen by children whose mothers worked full-time.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during preschool years groups ($F=3.19$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of working mothers grow up to be less competent parents than other children because they have not had adequate parental role models.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.18	1.19	45
Part-time	2.48	.99	40
Full-time	2.39	1.28	44

Children of mothers who were non-employed believed most strongly that children of working mothers do not have good role models for parenting and will become less competent parents. Those children of part and full-time employed mothers were in significantly less agreement with this item.

Separate one-way ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Benefit subscale revealed two significant group differences. On both items, students' whose mothers were non-employed during their preschool years were least likely to see maternal employment as beneficial.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment during preschool years groups ($F=3.45$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: For young children, working mothers are good role models for leading busy and productive lives.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.69	1.02	45
Part-time	3.93	.92	40
Full-time	4.25	1.08	44

Children of mothers who worked full-time were in the strongest agreement that maternal employment provides a good role model for leading busy and productive lives. Those of part-time employed mothers were not as strongly convinced and those of non-employed mothers saw the least benefit on this item.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment during preschool years groups ($F=3.78$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: Daughters of working mothers are better prepared to combine work and motherhood, if they choose to do both.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.87	1.01	45
Part-time	4.25	1.06	40
Full-time	4.43	.90	44

Young adults whose mothers worked full-time during their child's preschool years perceived mothers' working as benefiting their daughters by helping them be better prepared to combine work and motherhood. Those young adults whose mothers were non-employed were least likely to perceive this benefit of maternal employment, while those of part-time employed mothers moderately agreed with this item.

Maternal Employment During the Elementary School Years

Oneway ANOVA were next performed in order to evaluate the relationship between maternal employment status during the participants' elementary school years (non-employment, part-time employment, and full-time employment) and students' perceptions of maternal employment costs and benefits to children. Significant differences on the Cost summary subscale were found ($F=7.03$; $df=2/125$; $p<.01$). Students whose mothers were not employed during elementary school years perceived there as being greater costs associated with maternal employment than the students whose mothers were in the other two maternal employment categories. (non-employment: $x=38.26$; $s.d.=10.09$; $n=31$, part-time employment $x=34.50$; $s.d.=8.74$; $n=28$, and full-time employment $x=31.03$; $s.d.=8.67$; $n=69$). Oneway ANOVA revealed significant group differences on seven individual items on the cost subscale. On these seven items, students whose mothers did not work at all during their elementary school years perceived there as being greater risks associated with maternal employment than the students whose mothers were in the other two maternal employment categories. Significant differences on the Benefit subscale were found among the maternal employment groups ($F=3.72$; $df=2/125$; $p<.05$). Students whose mothers worked full-time during elementary school years perceived there as being greater benefits associated with maternal employment than the students in the other two maternal employment groups (non-employment: $x=48.38$, $s.d.=6.66$, $n=31$, part-time employment $x=48.39$,$s.d.=7.09$,$n=28$, and full-time employment $x=52.06$, $s.d.=8.14$, $n=69$). Separate one-way ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Benefit subscale revealed three significant group differences. On each of three items, participants' whose mothers were employed full-time during their elementary school years perceived the greatest advantages associated with maternal employment. Those whose mothers worked part-time rated the advantages of maternal employment at an intermediate level, and those whose mothers did

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not work at all outside the home while they were in elementary school provided the lowest ratings of advantages.

Separate one-way ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Cost subscale revealed seven significant group differences. On all seven items, participants with non-employed mothers during their preschool years perceived maternal employment as most disadvantageous, while participants' with part-time employed mothers during their preschool years perceived moderate disadvantages. Participants with full-time employed mothers saw the least disadvantages.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=11.51$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children are less likely to form a warm and secure relationship with a mother who is working full-time.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	4.26	1.24	31
Part-time	4.07	1.12	28
Full-time	3.16	1.21	69

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=5.25$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Working mothers are more likely to have children with psychological problems than mothers who do not work outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.06	1.15	31
Part-time	2.57	1.07	28
Full-time	2.32	1.02	69

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=3.39$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children do better in school if their mothers are not working full-time outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.87	1.06	31
Part-time	3.48	1.15	29
Full-time	3.20	1.27	69

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=7.04$; $df=2/126$; $p< .01$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of working mothers grow up to be less competent parents than other children, because they have not had adequate parental role models.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.35	1.14	31
Part-time	2.62	1.08	39
Full-time	2.42	1.19	69

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=7.53$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Teenagers get into less trouble with the law if mothers do not work full-time outside the home.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.58	1.36	31
Part-time	2.93	1.46	28
Full-time	2.54	1.09	69

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=3.57$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of mothers who work develop lower self-esteem because they think they are not worth devoting attention to.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.13	1.09	31
Part-time	2.86	1.13	29
Full-time	2.51	1.12	69

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=4.48$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children of working mothers are more likely to experiment with drugs, alcohol and sex at an early age.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.29	1.35	31
Part-time	3.07	1.22	29
Full-time	2.54	1.23	69

Separate one-way ANOVA performed on the individual items of the Benefit subscale revealed three significant group differences.
Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school year's groups ($F=3.89$; $df=2/126$; $p< .05$)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: Boys whose mothers work are more likely to develop respect for women.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.83	1.00	31
Part-time	3.52	1.02	29
Full-time	4.13	1.01	69

Young adults whose mothers worked full-time or were non-employed during the elementary school years were more likely than the young adults whose mothers worked part-time to believe that boys develop greater respect for women if their mothers work full-time. Those whose mothers worked part-time were significantly less likely to perceive this benefit of maternal employment than those in the other two groups.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school years groups (F=6.42; df=2/126 ; p< .01)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: Daughters of working mothers are better prepared to combine work and motherhood, if they choose to do both.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.84	.97	31
Part-time	3.86	1.16	29
Full-time	4.46	.88	69

Young adults whose mothers worked full-time during their children's elementary school years were more likely than the young adults whose mothers were not employed or employed part-time to perceive mothers' working as benefiting their daughters by helping them to be better prepared to combine work and motherhood. Those young adults whose mothers were not employed or were employed part-time were in similar agreement on this item.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school years groups (F=4.06; df=2/126 ; p< .05)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: Sons of working mothers are better prepared to cooperate with a wife who wants both to work and have children.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.81	.83	31
Part-time	3.86	.69	29
Full-time	4.28	.97	69

Young adults whose mothers worked full-time during their children's elementary school years were more likely than the young adults whose mothers were not employed or employed part-time to perceive mothers' working as improving their sons ability to cooperate with a with that want to work and have children. Those young adults whose mothers were not employed or were employed part-time were in similar agreement on this item. .

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment states during elementary school years groups (F=4.47; df=2/90 ; p< .05)
BACMEC Benefit Subscale Item: Children whose mothers work are more likely to understand and appreciate the value of a dollar.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.27	.96	26
Part-time	3.55	.96	22
Full-time	4.00	1.09	45

Young adults whose mothers worked full-time during their children's elementary school years were more apt to believe that children of working mothers are more likely to understand and appreciate the value of a dollar. Young adults whose mothers were not employed were least likely to perceive this benefit of maternal employment, while those

with part-time employed mothers gave responses that fell in between those of the other two groups.

Maternal Employment During Adolescence

Oneway ANOVA were next performed in order to evaluate the relationship between maternal employment status during the participants' adolescent years (non-employment, part-time employment, and full-time employment) and students' perceptions of maternal employment costs and benefits to children. No significant differences on the summary scales emerged for either costs or benefits. However, one-way ANOVA revealed significant group differences on one individual item on the cost subscale.

Oneway ANOVA comparisons of three maternal employment during preschool years groups
($F=6.95$; $df=2/125$; $p< .01$).
BACMEC Cost Subscale Item: Children are less likely to form a warm and secure relationship with a mother who is working full-time.

	Mean	s.d.	N
Non-employment	3.91	1.03	30
Part-time	4.42	1.12	19
Full-time	3.33	1.33	79

Students whose mothers worked part-time during adolescent years were more likely perceive that children of working mothers fail to form a warm and secure relationship. Young adults whose mothers were not employed moderately endorsed this item, while young adults whose mothers worked full-time were least likely to see this as a cost.

Discussion

The attitudinal correlates of maternal employment among adult children whose mothers had worked full-time, part-time, or not at all varied across the different developmental periods considered. Young adults whose mothers worked part-time during the first two years of their life perceived significantly greater advantages and fewer disadvantages associated with maternal employment than young adults whose mothers worked full-time or were not employed while their children were infants. These adult children of part-time employed mothers not only reported the fewest costs associated with maternal work but reported the most benefits. The participants felt as though they still received the proper amount of motherly support, even though their mothers worked part-time. These favorable findings may reflect the fact that while it is very important for mothers to bond sufficiently with their infants, it is also beneficial for the mother to be able to get some time away from her infant. Working part-time may be advantageous for many mothers of infants because it offers them the best balance, which may indirectly benefit their children.

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The young adults whose mothers worked part-time during infancy felt that their mothers were good role models because they had led busy and productive lives. They also felt that as children they developed more positive regard towards women's intelligence and competence because they admired their mother's intellectual skills and her ability to work and be proficient in getting everything accomplished in and outside the home.

When respondents were grouped on the basis of maternal employment during the preschool and elementary school years, as compared to the infancy years, a different pattern of findings emerged. Young adults whose mothers were not employed during these stages of development reported the greatest costs associated with maternal employment, while participants whose mothers worked full-time perceived maternal employment as most beneficial.

Those who had mothers who worked during this stage of their children's lives had greater respect for women. Their daughters felt better prepared to combine work and motherhood if they choose to do both. In addition, boys who grew up with working mothers felt better prepared for supporting a wife who wants to work and raise a family. The children of full-time working mothers also reported appreciating the value of a dollar more, because they can see all the hard work and time their parents put into making ends meet and all the energy it takes in order to enjoy certain luxuries.

As children grow older, it seems as though maternal employment doesn't affect their well being as much. By adolescence, teens may not need their mothers as they did when they were younger. This is not to say that adolescents don't need their mothers anymore, but rather that they may have already learned most of what they need to know earlier in life. However, some still perceive there as being a risk that teens whose parents both work full-time will engage in unlawful behavior, such as using drugs or alcohol, due to the lack of supervision at home.

This study had a few limitations which would be desirable to address in future research. One limitation involves its focus on young adults who came from middle class families who were given the opportunity to attend a small liberal arts college. The real casualties of maternal employment may not have been properly represented in this sample of college students. On the other hand, since many of these middle class families may have been in a financial position to choose maternal employment (rather than to depend upon it for basic survival), findings about the correlates of maternal employment in this population may be useful to others facing the same choice. Another interesting issue for further research is whether the participants in this study share the same views as their parents on the issue of maternal employment. A third interesting matter for future exploration involves the students' plans for raising their own families.

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